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## WAS ATHENS IN THE AGE OF PERICLES ARISTOCRATIC?

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The majority of the numerous books which deal with Athenian political and social life in the latter part of the fifth century B.C. convey to student and to reader the general, but emphatic, impression that the *polis* Athens, while theoretically a democracy, was, generally speaking, an aristocracy. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the composite picture of Athens under Pericles, as represented in the traditional view of the handbooks, reveals a society brilliant in its achievements, but quite selfishly constituted, and gravely defective, save from the viewpoint of the favored few. Profound social distinctions, even among the citizens themselves, are insisted upon. The conception still is widely prevalent that the *élite* of Athenian society, few but fit, led a life of glorious but intensely selfish leisure, which was their lordly prerogative as the result of the ruthless exploitation of all professional men, artists, producers, traders, artisans, workers, resident aliens, and slaves. Almost everywhere we find the time-honored assertion that in Athens all work was despised, labor was condemned, the workers were disdained, and, in fact, that *any* service for which financial remuneration was received was in disrepute and branded the doer with a humiliating social stigma. The free man is supposed to have done little or no work, for surely the aristocratic citizen must have a completely independent and carefree existence for his manifold political, social, and religious duties.

Let me now present some typical quotations from some recent books on Athens which give this false, or exaggerated, as I think, impression of the nature of Athenian society in the second half of the fifth century B.C., in that they assert that it was essentially aristocratic. In the ninth edition (1915) of that very popular, widely influential, and, in many respects, admirable little book,

*The Greek View of Life* by Mr. Lowes Dickinson, we read (italics are mine in every case): "In the Greek conception the citizen was an aristocrat. His excellence was thought to consist in public activity; and to the performance of public duties he ought therefore to be able to devote *the greater part of his time and energy*. But the existence of such a privileged class involved the existence of a class of producers to support them; and *the producers, by the nature of their calling, be they slave or free, were excluded from the life of the perfect citizen*. They had not the necessary leisure to devote to public business; neither had they the opportunity to acquire the mental and physical qualities which would enable them to transact it worthily. They were therefore regarded by the Greeks as an inferior class. . . . In Athens the most democratic of all the Greek communities, though they were admitted to the citizenship and enjoyed considerable political influence, *they never appear to have lost the stigma of social inferiority*. And the distinction which was more or less definitely drawn in practice *between the citizens proper and the productive class* was even more emphatically affirmed in theory" (pp. 74-75). "The obverse of the Greek citizen, who realized in the state the highest life, was *an inferior class of producers who realized only the means to subsistence*" (p. 75). "The *inferiority* of the artisan and the trader was further emphasized by the fact that *they were excluded by their calling* from the cultivation of the higher personal qualities; from the training of the body by gymnastics and of the mind by philosophy; *from habitual conversance with public affairs*; from that perfect balance, in a word, of the physical, intellectual, and moral powers, which was only to be attained by a process of *self-culture, incompatible with the pursuance of a trade for bread*" (p. 82). "The existence of the Greek citizen depended upon that of an inferior class who were regarded, not as ends in themselves, but as means to his perfection." "The aim of modern societies is not to separate off a privileged class of citizens, set free by the labour of others to live the perfect life, but rather to distribute impartially to all the burdens and advantages of the state, so that every one shall be at once a labourer for himself and a citizen of the state. But this idea is clearly incompatible with the Greek conception of the

citizen" (p. 130). "It is because labour with the hands or at the desk distorts or impairs the body, and the petty cares of a calling pursued for bread pervert the soul, that so *strong a contempt was felt by the Greeks for manual labour and trade.*" "If then the artisan . . . in Athens never altogether threw off *the stigma of inferiority attaching to his trade*, the reason was that the life he was compelled to lead was incompatible with the Greek conception of excellence" (p. 134). "The Greeks, on the whole, were quite content to sacrifice the majority to the minority. Their position was fundamentally aristocratic; they exaggerated rather than minimized the distinctions between men, the freeman and the slave, the gentleman and the artisan, regarding them as natural and fundamental, not as the casual product of circumstances. The 'equality' which they sought was proportional, not arithmetical, not of equal rights to all." "In a modern state it is different though class distinctions are clearly enough marked, yet the point of view from which they are regarded is fundamentally different. They are attributed rather to accidents of fortune than to varieties of nature. The artisan, for example, ranks no doubt lower than the professional man; but no one maintains that he is a different kind of being incapable by nature, as Aristotle asserts, of the characteristic excellence of man" (p. 79).

In *Greek Ideals*,<sup>1</sup> by Mr. C. Delisle Burns, a study of Athenian social life of the period under consideration, the Greek aristocratic conception of individual liberty is likewise, I believe, over-emphasized. Thus we find the statements: "It seemed essential that liberty and equality should only be the right of *a few males*. . . . Slaves and *workingmen had no time and no developed capacity for the 'good life'*" (p. 76). "Society was conceived only in terms . . . of *a small social caste*" (p. 109). "The Athenian citizen might object to doing manual labour" (p. 112).

Similar assertions are common. Thus Mr. Edwards in Whibley's *Companion to Greek Studies*: "The prejudice against trades and handicrafts was most pronounced in Sparta: elsewhere, though the political disabilities might be reduced or removed, the *social stigma was scarcely diminished*—indeed, even the fullest develop-

<sup>1</sup> (1917) Reviewed by Van Hook in *Classical Weekly*, XI, 207.

ment of democracy at Athens did but stereotype the conventional horror of hard work, and proclaimed leisure, and not labour, to be the citizen's privilege. . . . The marvel is that, *amid all this depreciation*, mechanical skill and artistic taste should have attained so high a standard" (p. 437).

Gardner and Jevons, *Manual of Greek Antiquities* (p. 379), quote Aristotle and Plato to show the extreme *popular* prejudice against handiwork and the disesteem in which it was *universally* held—"only those too poor to buy slaves had to work themselves."

Gulick, in his excellent *Life of the Ancient Athenians*, says: "The class of artisans comprised callings which among us are regarded as the most dignified professions. Wherever one of these vocations *was in disrepute*, the cause is found in the fact that the person concerned *took money for his services*, and was to that extent not independent of others. Even the great artists, painters, and sculptors fell under *public contempt* simply because they earned money. A few artists, like Phidias, are said to have enjoyed the friendship of eminent men of aristocratic birth; but most of these stories of intimacy are later exaggerations which have not taken into account the conditions of ancient industrial life. Schoolmasters, teachers of music and gymnastics, sophists and even physicians were not highly regarded" (p. 233). "To the *emporos* attached some of the *stigma of personal labor*." "Ancient communities (e.g., Athens) whose *citizens despised trade and manual labor*" (p. 65). "Art, letters, and politics, claimed the interest of the ordinary citizen far more than they do today, because it was the policy of Pericles *to render the democracy of Athens a leisure class, supported by their slaves and the revenues of the Empire*" (p. 118).

But enough of such representative quotations, they might be multiplied indefinitely. It is the aim of this paper to endeavor to correct, or, at least, to assist in the modification of this all too general conception of an essentially aristocratic Athenian society, a conception which is certainly false in some of its aspects and exaggerated or overemphasized in others.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Attention should be called to several books which sanely discuss the topics under consideration and to which the writer is indebted: Francotte, *L'industrie dans*

Before a consideration of the subject proper it may well be asked, why is it that this view of Athenian society as aristocratic, if erroneous, is generally held? The reasons are, I believe, as follows: (1) Athens, like other Greek states, at an early period in its history, in fact, until after Solon and Cleisthenes, was, in large measure, oligarchic and aristocratic both politically and socially. Modern writers mistakenly assume that these early conditions, particularly in social life, continued. (2) Certain Greek states, e.g., Sparta, Thebes, and Crete never suffered democratization. The strictly aristocratic conditions which were permanently characteristic of these states are sometimes thought of as necessarily existing also in Athens. (3) Modern writers have the tendency implicitly to follow Plato and Aristotle as authorities and imagine that actual fifth century Athenian conditions are accurately reflected in the pages of these philosophers even when the latter are discussing theoretical politics and imaginary and ideal societies. Caution must always be observed surely in the case of these "Laconizing" theorists who, furthermore, were intense aristocrats and distrusted democracy. (4) It is true that Athens was conservative in the granting of full and technically legal citizenship to foreigners and slaves. (5) Slavery was, of course, a recognized institution from time immemorial throughout the ancient world and Athens as well. (6) Physical *drudgery* was not relished by the Athenians. The ground is now cleared for our discussion.

#### I. POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Was Athens in the Age of Pericles really a political democracy? We are fortunate in having no less an authority than Pericles himself to testify for us; Pericles, the aristocrat, as reported by Thucydides,<sup>1</sup> the aristocrat. "Our government is *not copied*<sup>2</sup> from those of our neighbors; we are an example to them rather

*la Grèce ancienne*; Guirard, *La main d'œuvre industrielle dans l'ancienne Grèce*; Clerc, *Les mètèques Athéniens*; Meyer, *Die Sklaverei im Altertum* in his *Kleine Schriften*; Ferguson, *Greek Imperialism*, chap. ii; Zimmern, *The Greek Commonwealth* (especially chaps. vii and xv). See also Croiset, *Aristophanes and the Political Parties at Athens* (trans. by Loeb); Van Hook, *Classical Journal*, XI, 495.

<sup>1</sup> Bk. II, *The Funeral Oration*; see Zimmern, *op. cit.*, pp. 196 ff.

<sup>2</sup> I.e., from Sparta.

than they to us. Our constitution is named a *democracy*, because it is in the hands not of the few but of *the many*. Our laws secure *equal* justice for *all* in their private disputes, and our *public opinion* welcomes and honors talent in *every branch of achievement*, not for any sectional reason, but on grounds of excellence alone. And as we give free play to *all* in our public life, so we carry the same spirit into our daily relations with one another. We are obedient to whomsoever is set in authority, and to the laws, more especially to those which offer protection to the oppressed and those unwritten ordinances whose transgression brings admitted shame. Wealth to us is not mere material for vainglory but an opportunity for achievement; and *poverty* we think is *no disgrace* to acknowledge but a real degradation to make no effort to overcome. *Our citizens attend both to public and private duties, and do not allow absorption in their own various affairs to interfere with their knowledge of the city's*. We differ from other states in regarding the man who *holds aloof from public life* not as quiet but as useless. In a word I claim that our city as a whole is an education to Greece, and that her members yield to none, man by man, for independence of spirit, many-sidedness of attainment, and complete self-reliance in limbs and brain."

In Athens, then, if not in Sparta and Plato's *Republic*, the state existed for the individual and not the individual for the state. It is unnecessary to do more than briefly to cite the facts which reveal Athens as a political democracy. *All* citizens over eighteen years of age were members of the Assembly; *all* citizens over thirty were eligible to membership in the Council of Five Hundred, the members of which were elected annually *by lot*; *all* citizens over thirty were eligible to election *by lot* to serve as jurymen in the Heliastic law courts. As Warde Fowler says: "Every citizen had the right to hold all offices, with the doubtful exception in 450, of the archonship; to serve on the Council; to take part in the Assembly; to sit as judge. There was no privileged class, no skilled politicians, no bureaucracy. The whole Athenian people were identified with, actually were the state. All shared equally in the government, education, and pleasures."<sup>1</sup> For this complete

<sup>1</sup> *The City State*, pp. 152 and 156.

political equality we may let Mr. Dickinson himself eloquently testify. Although he tells us (p. 83) that the artisan and the trader were excluded by their calling from habitual converse with public affairs,<sup>1</sup> later he says (p. 112): "Among the free citizens, who included persons of every rank, no political distinction at all was drawn. All of them from the lowest to the highest had the right to speak and vote in the great assembly of the people which was the ultimate authority; all were eligible to every administrative post; all sat in turn as jurors in the law courts. The disabilities of poverty were minimized by payment for attendance in the assembly and courts. And what is more extraordinary, even distinctions of ability were levelled by the practice of filling all offices, except the highest, by lot. The citizenship was extended to every rank and calling; the poor man jostled the rich, the shopman the aristocrat, in the Assembly; cobblers, carpenters, smiths, farmers, merchants and retail dealers met together with the ancient landed gentry." "Politically the Athenian trader, and the Athenian artisan, was the equal of the aristocrat of purest blood" (p. 115).

We know that the power of the early Athenian aristocracy had been seriously curtailed by the legislation of Solon and Cleisthenes. After the Persian Wars its influence as an organized party became extremely small because of the democratic reforms of Ephialtes and Pericles through the blows dealt to the prestige of the Areopagus, the exile of Cimon, and the complete ascendancy of Pericles. There was, then, in Athens in the Age of Pericles complete political equality among the citizens; poverty, wealth, station, family, occupation, and prestige all were of no consequence.

## II. SOCIAL CONDITIONS

1. *Social status of citizens in general.*—Let us now turn to an examination of the social conditions of Athenian life and scrutinize it for evidences of caste, class, snobbery, inequality, or injustice. In the city the house of the rich man and that of the poor man

<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact the Assembly was largely constituted of these very elements, which indeed formed the majority; see Plat. *Prot.* 319 D, Plat. *Rep.* 8. 565 A. From Xen. *Mem.* 3. 7. 6 we learn that the Assembly was composed of fullers, cobblers, carpenters, smiths, farmers, wholesale and retail dealers.



differed little in appearance. Private unostentation as contrasted with public magnificence was the rule.<sup>1</sup> In fact, it was considered a breach of good taste to build and occupy a house of conspicuous cost or size. In the next place, simplicity in dress was general. Only the young (and, in particular, the Knights) dared to provoke possible derision or to invite popular prejudice by foppery of attire or appearance. Young Mantiheus<sup>2</sup> apologizes to the Senate for his long hair and Strepsiades<sup>3</sup> is disgusted with his son's "dandyism." Wearing the hair long might arouse suspicion of Spartan or aristocratic sympathies. An ancient witness<sup>4</sup> testifies that "the Athenian people are not better clothed than the slave or alien, nor in personal appearance is there any superiority." Of course the nature of the employment might influence the quality and nature of the costume.

In all forms of social activity all the citizens participated on a parity. All could attend the theater; all joined in the public festivals and in religious sacrifices and observances. In fact, if any element in Athens was favored it was the poor and lowly. Listen to the testimony of that unregenerate old Aristocrat (just quoted) who is bitterly opposed to Democracy as an institution but admits that it really exists in Athens. He says that if you *must* have Democracy Athens is a perfect example of it, "I do not praise the Polity of the Athenians, because the very choice involves the welfare of the *baser* folk as opposed to that of the *better* class. The poorer classes and the people of Athens should have the advantage over the men of birth and wealth because it is the people who row the vessels, and put around the city her girdle of power. Everywhere greater consideration is shown to the base, to poor people, and to common folk, than to persons of good quality—this should not surprise us, this is the keystone of the preservation of the democracy. It is these poor people, this common folk, this riff-raff, whose prosperity, combined with the growth of their numbers, enhance the democracy. All the world over the cream of society is in opposition to the democracy. The objection may be raised

<sup>1</sup> Dem. *Ol.* 3. 25-26.

<sup>2</sup> Lysias 16. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Ar. *Clouds* 14.

<sup>4</sup> [Xen.] *Polity of the Athenians* (trans. by Dakyns), composed about 425 B.C. falsely attributed to Xenophon. Cf. Botsford and Sihler, *Hellenic Civilization*, 222 ff.

that it was a mistake to allow the universal right of speech and a seat in council; privileges which should have been reserved for the cleverest, the flower of the community. But if only the better people sat in council blessings would fall only to that class and the baser folk would get nothing. Whereas it is the other way round. The people desire to be free and to be masters and their bad legislation is the very source of the people's strength and freedom." The happy lot of the common people in ancient Athens is further described by this contemporary witness: "The rich man trains the chorus; it is the people for whom the chorus is trained. The rich man is trierarch or gymnasiarch and the people profit by their labors. The whole state sacrifices at public cost a large number of victims; the Attic Democracy keeps holiday. They build at public cost a number of palaestras, dressing-rooms, bathing establishments; the mob gets the benefit of the majority of these luxuries rather than the select few or the well-to-do. In the theater the people do not like to be caricatured in comedy; it is the wealthy or well-born or influential man who is lampooned."

Enough has been said to show that the door of opportunity was open to all in Athens at this time. Worth, ability, character, not accident of birth or position counted. The rich did not grow richer while the poor grew poorer. Surplus wealth was not at the disposal of the few. It was expended for the good of all upon religious observances, the drama, gymnasia, the navy, public buildings and their adornment, and the state support of orphans and those physically incapacitated for earning a living. The wealthier classes were expected, and, in fact, were compelled, to contribute according to their means to the common welfare through the various liturgies and taxes.

2. *The social status of the producer, artisan, etc.*—We come next to a study of the social and economic position of the workers of various kinds. As we have seen, the handbooks in general tell us that all work was regarded as degrading, every activity for which one was paid was condemned, and producers, artisans, and all workers were branded by a humiliating social stigma. No adequate proof of such a condition of affairs is forthcoming; indeed, the actual situation seems to have been otherwise in democratic

Athens of the time of Pericles. Why then is there this general mistaken notion? It is largely because of certain pronouncements in Plato and Aristotle. In the *Laws* and the *Republic* Plato insists on the gulf that should separate the citizen from the mechanic or trader. His ideal state rests upon agriculture and all the citizens are landed gentry forbidden to engage in trade. In this ideal *polis* trade and commerce are to be insignificant and the productive class is actually debarred from all political rights. A caste system is presupposed; governors and governed are sharply differentiated and each class is trained for its predestined position in the state. Aristotle, too, in his ideal state divides the population, on the one hand, into a ruling class of soldiers and judges and, on the other, into a subject class consisting of artisans and producers. As a mechanical trade renders the body and soul and intellect of free persons unfit for the exercise and practice of virtue Aristotle denies to the artisan the proper excellence of man on the ground that his occupation and status are unnatural. In an extreme Democracy the mechanic and hired laborer must needs be citizens; this is impossible in an Aristocracy in which virtue and desert constitute the sole claim to the honors of state. Other radical statements of Aristotle are that the producer only differs from a slave in being subject to all instead of to one man and that the sedentary and within-door nature of the crafts unfitted the man who exercised them for war and the chase, the most dignified employments. Physical labor is condemned by him in that it is cheapening to work for another for pay or material profit as this reduces one to the rank of a slave.<sup>1</sup> This would seem to be the chief source for the curious statement everywhere repeated that all Athenians who did anything for pay were condemned. That Aristotle did not represent Athenian opinion is conclusively shown by his condemnation of agriculture as preventing leisure which is at the basis of virtue. But no one doubts that agriculture was generally and highly esteemed by the Athenians. In Xenophon<sup>2</sup> in a passage which is represented as spoken by Socrates those base mechanic arts are condemned which ruin the bodies of all those engaged in them, as those who are forced to remain in sitting

<sup>1</sup> *Politics* 5. 1337b8.

<sup>2</sup> *Oec.* 4. 2-3.

postures and hug the gloom or crouch whole days confronting a furnace. This results in physical enervation and enfeebling of the soul and the victims have no leisure to devote to the claims of friendship and the state. Such will be sorry friends and ill-defenders of the fatherland.

It is absolutely wrong to accept these passages as conclusively proving that the Athenians regarded work as degrading and workers as social outcasts. (1) These writers do not claim to be describing actual Athenian conditions. (2) They are postulating an "ideal" society. (3) They are ever admirers of Spartan,<sup>1</sup> and not their own Athenian polity. (4) They were intense aristocrats in sympathy and mistrusted democracy. (5) They despised the body and its needs. (6) They had particularly in mind soul-destroying drudgery, not reasonable labor and skilled work; corrupt and petty business, not necessary and honest trade and affairs. Frequently they were contrasting the philosopher-statesmen set apart for ruling with the defective yokel. We can, indeed, if we wish, invoke the above-quoted writers in defense of work and the dignity of producing. Plato says in the *Laws*:<sup>2</sup> "Retail trade in a city is not by nature intended to do any harm, but quite the contrary; for is not he a benefactor who reduces the inequalities and incommensurabilities of goods to equality and common measure? And this is what the power of money accomplishes, and the merchant may be said to be appointed for this purpose." Plato goes on to observe that many occupations have suffered ill-repute because of the inordinate love of gain and consequent corrupt practices on the part of the unscrupulous. He concludes: "If . . . we were to compel the best men everywhere to keep taverns for a time, or carry on retail trade, or do anything of that sort; or if, in consequence of some fate or necessity, the best women were compelled

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Livingstone, *The Greek Genius*, etc., ch. vii. "All the political thinkers of Greece, with the exception of Plato, speak of the state as existing for the individual. Plato is not typically Greek. If Hellenism had been a persecuting religion, it would have been bound to send him to the stake. He is no admirer of freedom and is not a genuine humanist. The chief features of Plato's state are borrowed from Lycurgus with the three castes: labor, military, and governing." See Bury, *History of Greece*, II. p. 148.

<sup>2</sup> xi. 918, Jowett's trans

to follow similar callings, then we should know how agreeable and pleasant all these things are; and if all such occupations were managed on incorrupt principles, they would be honored as we honor a mother or nurse." Aristotle in the *Politics* condemns agriculture as we have seen, yet elsewhere<sup>1</sup> he declares: "We honor the generous and brave and just. Such we conceive to be those who do not live upon others; and *such are they who live by labor* . . . chiefly agriculturists, and chief among the agriculturalists, the small farmers." Now these small farmers tilled their own fields;<sup>2</sup> in the remote districts of Attica slavery had scarcely penetrated. Xenophon<sup>3</sup> tells the story of Eutherus, an old friend of Socrates, who, in poverty, as his property had been lost in the war, was gaining a livelihood by bodily toil. Socrates warns him that such employment in his case can be only temporary because of lack of necessary physical strength and urges him to secure a position as assistant to a large proprietor as manager of an estate. Eutherus fears the work may be servile. Socrates replies that heads of departments in a state who manage property are regarded not as performing undignified work but as having attained a higher dignity of freedom. Eutherus still demurs on the ground that he does not like to be accountable to anyone. Socrates replies that it is difficult to find work that is devoid of liability to account. It is difficult to avoid mistakes or unfriendly criticism. "Avoid captious critics," he says, "attach yourself to the considerate. Whatever you can do, do it heart and soul and make it your finest work." Another interesting and significant opinion of Socrates on this subject is reported by Xenophon<sup>4</sup> which was expressed in a conversation between the philosopher and Aristarchus. The time was during the régime of the Thirty when economic and political conditions were very bad. Aristarchus' house was full of his indigent female relatives, fourteen in all. As these ladies are all expert needlewomen, skilled in the making of garments, Socrates advises his friend to put them to work; Ceramon, for example, with a few slaves, is very prosperous. Aristarchus objects to this proposal; the situations are not comparable; the members of his

<sup>1</sup> *Rhet.* 2. 1381a.

<sup>3</sup> *Mem.* 2. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *ol atroupyol.*

<sup>4</sup> *Mem.* 2. 7-8.

large household are not barbarian slaves but are kinswomen and free-born. Socrates replies: "Then, on the ground that they are free-born and relatives you think they ought to do nothing but eat and sleep? Or is it your opinion that free-born people who live in this way lead happier lives and are more to be congratulated than those who devote themselves to such useful arts of life as they are skilled in? Are work and study of no value? Did your relatives learn what they know merely for useless information or as a future asset? Is the well-tempered life and a juster one attained rather through idleness or the practice of the useful? If they were called upon to do some shameful work, let them choose death rather than that; but it is otherwise. It is suitable work for women. The things which we know are those we can best perform; it is a joy to do them, and the result is fair."

Plenty of evidence is available to show that work was esteemed, not only in the times portrayed by Homer in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Hesiod in his *Works and Days*, but in Athens of the fifth century, B.C.<sup>1</sup> In Athens there was actually a law directed against idleness.<sup>2</sup> That it was long in force is shown by the fact that Lysias wrote a speech in connection with a prosecution for ἀργία<sup>3</sup> for which the penalty on conviction was a fine of one hundred drachmas and ἀτιμία if the accused were thrice convicted. Plutarch<sup>4</sup> tells us that a son who had not been taught a trade by his father was thereby released from the obligation to support his parent in old age. We have already quoted Pericles to the effect that not poverty but indolence is degrading.

Now the old-fashioned assumption that the Athenians found abundant leisure and opportunity for the *real life* (i.e., art, literature, politics, and philosophy) only because hirelings, slaves, and women did everything for them and the state treasury liberally supported them in *dolce far niente* is ridiculous.<sup>5</sup> One thing is certain from all we know of the Athenians; they were not indolent; they were energetic in mind and body. Certainly in any state the

<sup>1</sup> See Guiraud, *op. cit.*, 37 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Attributed to Solon by Hdt. 2. 177 and Diodor. 1. 77.

<sup>3</sup> Lysias, frag. 17 (Teub.).

<sup>4</sup> Sol. 22.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ferguson, *op. cit.*, 61 ff., to whom I am here indebted.

wealthy are but a minority of the total population and even upon these rests the duty to manage their property and care for investments. Participation in public life and fulfilment of the demands and duties of good citizenship did not exact from the average Athenian anything like the major part of his waking hours. The Assembly met four times in each prytany (or tenth of a year period), i.e., less than once a week. As the attendance was voluntary only a fraction of all who were entitled to attend were ever present, as convenience or interest dictated. The Council was limited to five hundred citizens and no one might serve more than twice; furthermore, fifty only of the Council (οἱ πρυτάνεις, the standing committee) were continuously on duty so that the majority thus were free to attend to their private affairs. The Heliaea, or Courts of Justice, drew their dicasts or judges for jury service from a list of six thousand citizens. These were usually men of advanced years who had volunteered for such service. Universal military service at this time was not obligatory. Festivals and contests were generally attended but they occurred probably not oftener than once a week on the average. It has been estimated that a total of from two to three years of every citizen's life were required for deliberative and administrative duties. Many writers have emphasized the huge number of citizens who were supposedly pensioners luxuriously supported, apparently permanently and completely, by largess from the Periclean treasury. We have seen that public duties were not constant. As for the compensation it must be remembered that the daily living wage for the workman was from one drachma (about 18 cents), to one and a half. Now at the time under consideration Assemblymen received no compensation; jurymen received two obols (about six cents) daily for service; members of the Council of Five Hundred, elected annually by lot, were paid five obols (about fifteen cents). In the light of these facts how can it be claimed that Pericles *corrupted* the citizens generally by gifts of money, making them idle, cowardly, and greedy<sup>1</sup> or to assume that these citizens were all dependent on public pay and could entirely support their households on these meager stipends. Mr. Grundy<sup>2</sup> declares:

<sup>1</sup> So Plat. *Gorg.* 515 E.

<sup>2</sup> *Thucydides and the History of His Age*, p. 107.

"A condition of things in which a large proportion of a community is either practically or wholly dependent on the community for subsistence is unhealthy from both a social and political viewpoint." But only a minority of the fifty to sixty thousand adult male citizens received any state pay. The remuneration given was not a living wage; it was merely a contribution to support by which Pericles provided that *all*, and not merely the well-to-do, might participate, in turn, in civic affairs and obtain that benefit and culture from active personal public service to which he eloquently refers in the Funeral Oration. Nor was the remuneration intended as a sop to placate the discontented and starving proletariat. As Ferguson<sup>1</sup> says: "Pericles did not intend to create a class of salaried officials; nor yet to make an advance toward communism. His ideal was political, not economic, equality—to enable all, irrespective of wealth or station, to use the opportunities and face the obligations which democracy brought in its train. Like all the great democratic leaders who preceded him, he was a nobleman by birth and breeding, and, like them, he did not doubt for a moment that the culture that enobled the life of his class would dignify and uplift that of the masses also. His aim was to unite the whole people in a community of high ideas and emotions. It was to make them a nation of noblemen." If this were not the case, Pericles' noble speech, which stands in history by the side of Lincoln's Gettysburg address, is the most hypocritical document preserved to us from the past.

Since the number of wealthy citizens was small how did the ordinary citizen gain his livelihood? It was by means of agriculture, handicrafts, trades, wholesale and retail business, and daily labor. No occupation was more respected and admired than agriculture. Farms were small, tenancy almost unknown. The small farmer tilled his fields with his own hands. In the arts and crafts and in labor no one needed to be idle for the state policies of Pericles and the great building operations not only gave employment to all the residents of Athens, whether free men or slaves, but attracted workers from far and near. Thousands of citizens, perhaps a third of the whole, gained a livelihood by labor. While

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 64.



commerce was largely in the hands of the resident-aliens, and the heaviest drudgery was performed by slaves, the mass of the skilled workers were free citizens. Stone-cutters, masons, and sculptors had their shops or yards where they worked privately with their apprentices, or they might be engaged in public work, as the building operations on the Acropolis, working side by side with other citizens, with metics, and with slaves.<sup>1</sup>

Modest means, even poverty (certainly *paupertas*), was the rule in Athens and was no bar to achievement and distinction. Life and its needs was simple, and money in itself as an accumulation was not desired. A uniform wage was paid practically to all skilled workmen alike. Everyone who had skill or art was an artist, a term applied to sculptors, painters, physicians, and cobblers. Our handbooks generally assert that every occupation or profession which brought any financial return was despised and its practitioner was socially held in contempt. Slight reflection should show the absurdity of this thesis; there is no actual evidence to prove it. Plato, to be sure, who was wealthy and an aristocrat, sneers at those sophists and teachers who were compelled to take money for teaching. Of course there were some charlatans in this profession, but we may be certain that such sophists as Gorgias, Protagoras, Isocrates, and Alcidamas (all professors who accepted tuition from countless students who were only too glad to pay it) were held in high esteem in Athens. So were lawyers and speech-writers for pay, such as Antiphon, Lysias, and Isaeus. Literary men who accepted pay, poets who received purses for prizes, and actors who profited financially by their labors stood in the highest social esteem. The prestige of physicians depended on their skill and personality. The ignoramus and the charlatan were contemned; the skilled and public-spirited surgeon might be richly rewarded and given an honorary crown and public thanks.<sup>2</sup> The elementary-school teacher, the music and gymnastic instructor, were not highly regarded, not because they received money for their services, but because most of them were ignorant men and often of inferior breeding. As for the great artists, sculptors, and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Zimmern, *Greek Commonwealth*, chap. vii.

<sup>2</sup> See Hermann, *Lehrb. d. Griech. Privataltertümer*, pp. 351 ff.; cf. Michel, *Rec.*, 120.

painters it is simply impossible to believe such a statement as this: "Even the great artists, painters, and sculptors fell under public contempt simply because they earned money."<sup>1</sup> Could this be true of a Phidias, a Polygnotus, an Ictinus, or a Mnesicles? But we know that Phidias was a warm and extremely intimate personal friend of Pericles.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the statesmen admired the sculptor so highly that the latter was entrusted with the greatest powers in superintending the ornamentation of the great temples. As for Polygnotus, a native of Thasos, he was the personal friend of Cimon,<sup>3</sup> and was actually honored by the Athenians with citizenship. Expert potters and vase-painters were very numerous. While some of these were resident aliens (e.g. Amasis and Brygos), very many were citizens. Thus we find such names of prominent vase-makers as Klitias, Ergotimos, Nikosthenes, Epiktetes, Pamphaios, Euphronios, Hieron, and Megakles. A typical vase-making establishment would engage the services of some twelve persons who might be citizens, metics, and slaves all working side by side in equality.<sup>4</sup> Citizen artists and artisans proclaim with pride, and do not conceal in shame, their occupations. Vase-painters and makers signed their wares. A scene (The Workshop of a Greek Vase-Painter) on a vase<sup>5</sup> shows two Victories and Athena herself crowning the workmen, as Pottier says: "a poetic symbol to glorify the fame of Athenian industry." Indeed, artisans regarded themselves as under the special protection of Hephaestus, the smith, and of Athena, mistress of the arts and crafts, and were proud to claim descent from these deities.<sup>6</sup> The potter, Euphronios, when making an offering to Athena calls himself in his dedication, *κεραμεύς*,<sup>7</sup> and the same procedure is followed by the fuller Simon, the tanner Smikros, and the potters, Mnesiades and Nearchus.<sup>8</sup> On a funereal bas-relief a cobbler was represented in a heroic attitude holding the insignia of his trade.<sup>9</sup> In the neighborhood of the Agora shops were especially numerous. These places served

<sup>1</sup> Gulick, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> Plut. *Per.* 13. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Plut. *Cim.* 4.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Pottier, *Douris and the Painters of Greek Vases*.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Fig. 2.

<sup>7</sup> *CIA*, IV, 1, p. 79, no. 362.

<sup>6</sup> Plato *Laws* 11. 920 D.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 42, 88, 101, 103.

<sup>9</sup> Conze, *Attische Grabreliefs*, T. I, Pl. 119.

as centers of gossip and of news for Athenians generally, as we are told in a graphic passage in an informative speech of Lysias.<sup>1</sup> It was among these craftsmen that Socrates, who had himself started in life as a stonecutter, spent much time in conversation. When he was, on an occasion, in search of a gentleman, he did not hesitate to go the round of various good carpenters, bronzeworkers, painters, and sculptors.

The comedies of Aristophanes are sometimes taken as proof of great social distinctions and inequalities existing among the citizens of Athens. Thus Mr. Dickinson,<sup>2</sup> in an endeavor to maintain his thesis that Athens was politically democratic but socially intensely aristocratic, quotes at length the passage from the comedy of the *Knights* where the sausage-seller is assured that his crass ignorance, boorish vulgarity, and dense stupidity are the strongest possible recommendations and assets for the highest political distinction. We are apparently to infer that Aristophanes was himself a deep-dyed aristocrat who despised the people and their rule and that he was the spokesman for a large aristocratic section of Athenian society who were extremely hostile to democratic government. These views are unwarranted and, indeed, have been wholly discredited.<sup>3</sup> Aristophanes was not a partisan; he was a conservative. He was not an opponent of democracy nor yet an aristocrat. It is true that he was a well-educated man of keen discernment, a friend of the *Knights*, and was doubtless on good terms with members of the aristocratic element in Athens. But he was friendly to the cause of democracy and sincerely wished to do it a favor by fearlessly revealing those defects to which a democratic form of

<sup>1</sup> *On the Cripple* (No. 24), 19-20: "My accuser says that many unprincipled men gather at my shop. But you (the large jury) all know that this accusation is not directed at me more than other artisans, nor at those who frequent my place more than those who go to other shops. Each of you is accustomed to visit the establishment of the perfumer, or the barber, or the leatherworker, etc. If any of you shall condemn my visitors then he must condemn the frequenters of other places; and if these, then *all the Athenians*. Certainly *all* of you are accustomed to frequent these shops and spend time somewhere or other."

<sup>2</sup> Page 113: "We may quote a passage from Aristophanes which shows at once the influence exercised by the trading class and the disgust with which that influence was regarded by *the aristocracy whom the poet represents*."

<sup>3</sup> See Croiset, *Aristophanes and the Political Parties at Athens*, trans. by Loeb.

government is especially liable and to give warning of possible dangers. This he constantly does in his plays with that exaggeration and caricature which are characteristic of the Old Comedy. In the opinion of the poet grave danger to the democracy might arise from unscrupulous demagoguery as represented by such knaves as Cleon. In the case of Cleon, who is lampooned in the play of the *Knights*, Aristophanes is actuated by intense animus as a result of previous personal encounters. Thus Cleon is excoriated as a vulgar, coarse, and despicable individual, and the dramatist tries to discredit his influence and popularity. It is a great mistake to take Aristophanes' savage attacks on vulgar demagogues and criticisms of weaknesses in democratic government as proof that Aristophanes was an aristocrat who condemned and arraigned the people as a whole for vulgarity and incompetency. That he did not despair of the democracy and that he sympathized and fraternized with the "lower classes" is shown by those plays in which the chief personages, although of low degree, are "sympathetic characters," e.g., Dicaeopolis, the charcoal-burner of the *Acharnians* and Strepsiades, the rough countryman of the *Clouds*.

In the opinion of Croiset, "the best Athenian society was the most open-hearted, most variously constituted, and most liberal society that has ever existed. The Athens that Plato shows us is a sort of talking place, where everybody is supposed to know everybody else, and where each person has a perfect right to make acquaintance with those he meets."<sup>1</sup> As typical illustrations of this social democracy he refers to two social gatherings of which we have admirable accounts. In Xenophon's *Symposium* we have a description of a banquet held in 421 B.C., in the house of the wealthy Callias, son of Hipponicus, of a great and rich Athenian family. The guests include all sorts of people, rich, poor, philosophers and ignoramuses, and all converse familiarly on terms of equality and intimacy. In the same way, Plato, in his *Symposium*, an account of a dinner held at the house of Agathon in 416 B.C., reveals the same intermixture of classes and professions.

3. *The status of the metics.*—We have now completed our discussion of the essentially democratic political and social status

<sup>1</sup> Croiset, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

of Athenian citizens. It remains to consider briefly the other two classes of the inhabitants of Attica who are commonly regarded, along with the poorer citizens, as the exploited victims of the Athenian aristocracy. These elements are the metics (resident aliens) and the slaves.

The rapid commercial growth and naval expansion of Athens early caused a shortage of workers and helpers of all kinds. The citizen population was numerically inadequate to assume these new duties in addition to the performance of their regular occupations and the prosecution of agriculture. This demand was met by extending a welcome to foreigners and this policy was continued and encouraged by Pericles. Their exact number in the year 431 B.C. is unknown. Meyer's<sup>1</sup> estimate is adult male metics 14,000 to about 55,000 adult male citizens; Clerc<sup>2</sup> estimates them at 24,000, followed by Zimmern;<sup>3</sup> Ferguson<sup>4</sup> gives the number of adult male citizens as 50,000, and a total population of Attica of 300,000 of which one-sixth was foreign and one-third servile. There may have been, then, one adult male metic for every two citizens.

What was the lot of the metics? It has been asserted that their social position was humiliating and that they were disliked and even despised by the ordinary citizen.<sup>5</sup> But contemporary evidence does not indicate this. Pericles says: "We open our city to all and never drive out foreigners." The scene of Plato's dialogue, *The Republic*, is the house of Cephalus, a prominent and influential man, but a metic who had been invited to Attica by Pericles himself. Another contemporary<sup>6</sup> speaks of "the equality between the metics and the full citizens, because the city stands in need of her resident aliens to meet the requirements of such a multiplicity of arts and for the purposes of her navy." Thucydides has Nicias say to metic sailors that they and not any friends or allies outside were the "only free partners with the Athenians in the Empire."<sup>7</sup> The metics participated fully in the social and reli-

<sup>1</sup> *Kleine Studien*, p. 129.

<sup>3</sup> P. 409.

<sup>2</sup> *Les mêtèques Athéniens*, p. 373.

<sup>4</sup> P. 42.

<sup>5</sup> Gulick, p. 65, and Headlam, *J.H.S.* (1906), p. 273.

<sup>6</sup> [Xen.] *Pol. of the Athenians*, I, 12.

<sup>7</sup> 7. 63. 3-4.

gious life of the city. Neither in dress nor appearance could they be distinguished from the citizens. They attended the theater,<sup>1</sup> they had a prominent place and dress in the Panathenaic procession,<sup>2</sup> they were demesmen and worshipped the same deities as the citizens.<sup>3</sup> Like the citizens they defrayed the expenses of the liturgies and served in the army and the navy. When any list of Athenian inhabitants is given the metics are always named as an essential element of the population.<sup>4</sup> They worked in large numbers side by side and for equal pay with the citizens in all kinds of work<sup>5</sup> as, for example, the construction of the Erechtheum.<sup>6</sup> They are found engaged in all the occupations, as workers and artisans of all kinds, as merchants at Peiraeus and at Athens, as bankers and capitalists, as painters, sculptors, and artists, as architects, and as philosophers and orators. Many of the famous pupils of Isocrates were metics, and no less than three of the celebrated Canon of the Ten Orators were resident aliens, namely, Isaeus of Chalcis, Lysias of Syracuse, and Deinarchus of Corinth.

The fee of twelve drachmas (about \$2.16) required of metics was a petty matter, a legal formality of registration and license and not an onerous tax burden, as it is often regarded. The liability to taxes beyond those required of citizens was not great. Perhaps the most serious limitation imposed upon aliens was the inability legally to own real property. But metics might be placed on equal terms as to taxation and the owning of property with the citizens thereby becoming *ισοτελεῖς*, and full citizenship might be conferred by vote of the Assembly. For example, an inscription<sup>7</sup> is preserved which records the grant of full citizenship on those metics who participated in the return of the democrats from Phyle (in 404-3) and helped in the restoration. In the list occur some strangely sounding foreign names, e.g. *Βενδιφάνης* and *Ψαμμῖς*, and their occupations as given are decidedly humble, such as cook, gardener, carpenter, fuller, etc.

The Athenians have been harshly criticized for not freely and generally granting citizenship to the metics. At first thought the

<sup>1</sup> Haigh, *Attic Theater*, pp. 364 and 376.

<sup>4</sup> See Guiraud, *op. cit.*, pp. 152 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Harpoc. and Suidas, *s.v.* Σκαφηφόροι.

<sup>5</sup> See Clerc, *Les métèques Athéniens*.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Wilamowitz, *Hermes*, vol. 22.

<sup>6</sup> *CIA*, I, 324.

<sup>7</sup> Hicks-Hill, *Greek Historical Inscriptions*, 161 ff.

criticism may seem valid and Athens illiberal. But the citizenship to the Athenian was not merely a political privilege; it was a sacred and usually an *inherited* possession. Loss of citizenship was to be feared more than death itself. Athens was a small and homogeneous community and the Athenians regarded themselves as autochthonous, like their favorite and symbolic cicada, sprung from the very soil of Attica itself. There is danger to a state in a too rapid influx of aliens who are given the powers of citizenship before real political and social assimilation has taken place. Even free America requires a term of years of probation before naturalization, and one of our greatest problems surely is this very one of the assimilation of the large number of our resident aliens. As Aristotle<sup>1</sup> says: "Another cause for revolution is difference of races which do not acquire a common spirit; for the state is not the growth of a day, neither is it a multitude brought together by accident. Hence the reception of strangers in colonies has generally produced revolution." It is true that the metics of Athens were not on full terms of political equality with the citizens but it has been shown that the yawning social and economic gulf postulated by modern writers between citizen and resident foreigner did not really exist.

4. *The status of the slaves.*—The institution of slavery existed throughout the ancient world from the earliest times. The Athenians, with but few exceptions, regarded slavery as natural and justifiable. It is again Aristotle, the fourth-century theorist and philosopher, who is made the starting-point for most modern discussions of slavery among the Greeks and the iniquity of the institution as maintained even by the cultured Athenians of the time of Pericles. In his treatment of this subject Aristotle<sup>2</sup> characterizes in a cold-blooded legal fashion the slave as being merely "a breathing machine or tool, a piece of animated property" (*ἐμψυχον ὄργανον, κτήμα τι ἐμψυχον*) and asserts that some men are so inferior that they may be regarded as slaves by nature. It is interesting to note, however, that Aristotle in another passage<sup>3</sup> admits that there were some who protested against such a view. He says: "Others regard slave owning as doing violence to nature

<sup>1</sup> *Politics* 1303a.

<sup>2</sup> *Politics* 1253b; *Eth. Nic.* 1161b.

<sup>3</sup> *Politics* 1253b.

on the ground that the distinction of slave and free man is wholly conventional and has no place in nature, and therefore is void of justice, as resting on mere force." Plato,<sup>1</sup> too, regards slavery as natural and justifiable but would forbid the enslavement of Greeks;<sup>2</sup> he admits, however, that "a slave is an embarrassing possession, the distinction between man and slave being a difficult one and slaves should be well-treated and not abused or insulted."<sup>3</sup> Aristotle, also, advises good treatment for the slave.<sup>4</sup>

Recent writers have been very severe in their strictures on the Athenians for tolerating slavery. Professor Mahaffy<sup>5</sup> writes: "Our real superiority lies in our moral ideals, in our philanthropy, our care of the poor and the sick."<sup>6</sup> I do not know whether the existence and justification of slavery as a natural institution are not the main cause of this difference. Xenophon tells us of the callous and brutal attitude to slaves and prisoners. If it was true then it must have been true ten times more in the colder, harsher, and more selfish society of the preceding generation. The milk of human kindness seems to have run dry among them. . . . The association of the good with the beautiful and the true seems incomplete. The latter two are attained in no ordinary degree. The former, which is to us the most divine of the three, was but poorly represented." Mr. Dickinson<sup>7</sup> goes so far as to say that Athenian slaves had *no political and social rights at all*. It is true that a minority of the slaves in Attica must have had an unenviable existence. These were the men who, in large numbers, slaved in the silver mines at Laurium. But what was the lot of the majority of the slaves in Attica? A contemporary<sup>8</sup> testifies: "An extraordinary amount of license is granted to slaves . . . where a blow is illegal, and a slave will not step aside to let you pass him on the street. . . . The Athenian people is not better clothed

<sup>1</sup> *Rep.* 5. 469.

<sup>2</sup> *Laws* 777b.

<sup>3</sup> *Rep.* 563b.

<sup>4</sup> *Politics* 1255b.

<sup>5</sup> *A Survey of Greek Civilization*, p. 150. But see Gulick, *Humanity among the Greeks in Harvard Essays on Classical Subjects*.

<sup>6</sup> Charity on a scientific basis, to be sure, is a modern institution, but we should not forget that Athens supported at public expense war-orphans (cf. Thuc. *Per. Funeral Speech*), also gave aid to the poor who were physically incapacitated for work (See Lysias, *On the Cripple*) and maintained public physicians. (See Boeckh, *Staatsh.*, I, 308 ff.)

<sup>7</sup> *P.* 76.

<sup>8</sup> [Xen.] *Pol. of the Athenians*, I, 10-12.



than the slave or alien, nor in personal appearance is there any superiority. . . . Slaves in Athens are allowed to indulge in luxury, and indeed in some cases to live magnificently.<sup>1</sup> . . . We have established an equality between our slaves and free men." Newly acquired slaves were received into the household with showers (καταχύσματα<sup>2</sup>) of confections. They participated as members of the family in religious rites and sacrifices.<sup>3</sup> They might attend the theater.<sup>4</sup> They worked side by side with their masters in the workshop or might even be permitted to work on their own account exercising an independent profession (χωρὶς οἰκοῦντες) either paying a commission to their masters or actually purchasing their freedom and gaining thereby the status of metics. The law protected a slave from being the victim of ὕβρις and the aggressor was subject to fine. The slave might not be put to death; a free man who had killed a slave was subject to prosecution for manslaughter. Refuge from a cruel master was afforded by flight to a temple as sanctuary,<sup>5</sup> namely, to the Theseum, the Sanctuary of the Erinyes, and the altar of Athena Polias. Freedom might be granted outright by the master, while the state at times enfranchised slaves who had fought for Athens.<sup>6</sup> In case of illness a slave might be affectionately cared for and at death mourned as a relative.<sup>7</sup>

It is certainly a false assertion to claim that Athenian society rested on slavery and that slavery was the dominant factor in Athenian economic life. The slaves were in the minority<sup>8</sup> in the total population at this period and the prosperity and greatness of the state was due to the industry, the initiative, and the efficiency of citizen and metic. Mr. Grundy<sup>9</sup> says that "the ultimate controlling fact in Greek politics of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. is the evil economic condition of the lower classes due to the competition of slave labour as competition with slave labour was impossible for the free proletariat." But this was not the case in the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Aesch. 1. 54.

<sup>2</sup> See Suidas, s.v. and Sch. to Ar. *Plut.* 768.

<sup>3</sup> Aesch. *Agam.* 1037, χερνιβῶν κοινωνοί.

<sup>4</sup> Haigh, *Attic Theater*, pp. 364, 368.

<sup>5</sup> See Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 42, and Whibley, *Comp. to Greek Studies*, § 541.

<sup>6</sup> *Thucydides and the History of His Age*, p. 106.

<sup>5</sup> Michel, *Rec.*, 557.

<sup>6</sup> Xen. *Mem.* 2. 4. 3.

<sup>7</sup> For example, Arginusae.

fifth century. There was no unemployment in Athens in the Age of Pericles. As we have seen the demand for labor was so great that extensive immigration was encouraged and there was a living wage for all. It is undoubtedly true, however, that in the fourth century and later the competition of slave with free labor gave rise to economic distress at a time when the citizens had decreased in number but the slaves had enormously increased. Mr. Grundy further declares that all hand-labor became associated with slavery and hence became incompatible with the dignity of the free man. The absolute falsity of this conception has already been established.

#### CONCLUSION

As a result of this study the following conclusions may be made:

1. Perhaps the greatest error and most unscientific procedure of many writers is to disregard or underestimate local conditions and, in particular, the chronological factor. Far too often authors indulge in generalizations regarding "the ancient Greek." It is no more possible to make general sweeping statements correctly characterizing the institutions of "the ancient Greek" than it would be accurately to estimate the civilization of "the modern European." Sparta and Athens were as far apart politically and socially in numerous respects as Germany and America, while Athens of the second half of the fifth century B.C. in its political, social, and economic conditions was by no means the Athens of the sixth or fourth centuries.

2. The ideal, aristocratic conceptions of Plato and Aristotle must not, and cannot be taken literally to reflect actual Athenian conditions. Certainly Aristotle should not be taken as having "an average Greek mind" in his attitude toward society<sup>1</sup> nor is he, or Plato, representative of fifth-century popular belief.<sup>2</sup>

3. The time-honored tradition that Athenians despised all work and looked down upon all workers is false and our handbooks

<sup>1</sup> As might be inferred from Mr. Dickinson, p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Guiraud, *Etudes économiques sur l'antiquité*, p. 52: "Les philosophes avaient beau alléguer que le citoyen, pour être vraiment à la hauteur de ses obligations, doit être comme à Sparte, un homme de loisir, et que, s'il ne peut pas vivre entièrement du travail d'autrui, il doit tout au moins s'interdire les professions manuelles, qui ont le double inconvénient de dégrader le corps et l'âme; cette opinion était en désaccord avec le sentiment public et la législation des démocraties."

need revision in their treatment of this topic.<sup>1</sup> It is true that in Athens, as with us, some occupations were thought less desirable and less dignified than others. In no land and at no time is the day laborer esteemed as highly as the statesman. Drudgery and menial employment the Athenians disliked and avoided; so do we. But the citizen who earned his living in some honest way and accepted money for his services was the rule and not the exception, nor was he as a result a social outcast but was a member, in good political and social standing, of the commonwealth.<sup>2</sup>

4. The disabilities of the metics are generally exaggerated. Their position in Athenian society was not humiliating. While the resident aliens did not have full participation in political duties and privileges they did share, in a remarkable measure, the life of the citizens.

5. Slavery was, of course, an Athenian institution, and the right of owning slaves was, in general, not questioned. It is clear, however, that as a rule they were treated by their masters with humaneness and consideration, with the exception of the lowest class of public slaves who were employed in the mines.

6. It would be absurd to claim perfection for the Athenian democracy of the Age of Pericles, or to pretend that the Athenians had completely and happily solved the innumerable and complicated social, political, and economic problems which still vex the world and which still await solution even today. Athens was not, of course, at any time a perfect democracy. But that it was far more democratic and far less aristocratic in the time of Pericles than is generally assumed and asserted is certain.

<sup>1</sup> Tucker, *Life in Ancient Athens*, is, in some respects, an exception.

<sup>2</sup> Guiraud, *ibid.*, p. 53: "Nul n'y rougissait de son métier, à moins qu'il ne fût notoirement sordide ou immoral."